

## ABSTRACT

An optical attenuator (10) for attenuating the intensity of an input light beam (40, 60) comprises a scattering element (70) for scattering the input light beam (40, 60) into a range of scattering directions. A beam collecting device (90) is  
5 arranged in the range of scattering directions for collecting a portion of the scattered light as an output beam (100). The attenuation of the output beam (100) with respect to the input light beam (40, 60) is dependent on the portion of the collected light relative to the range of scattering directions. The scattering element (70) is provided with a varying scattering angle distribution  
10 in order to control the attenuation.

[Fig. 1 for publication]